# The Application

You need to know where I'm coming from to understand that when I tell you I started out with all four mindsets that keep people from succeeding, and I successfully broke all four, I did not have small barriers to overcome. I had big ones. If I could do this, you can do this, no matter how big your own barriers are.

And you must. I did not succeed in my career until I had broken all four crippling mindsets.

Each mindset is represented by a single word. The story above is one of my several personal examples of VICTIM that I had to overcome.

The scary part about this, though, is that ALL FOUR Thinking Barriers are not only common... they're pervasive. They are often popular, and frequently we are **encouraged** to adopt them because doing so benefits others, **though it never benefits us.**

One more time on that because this is where the process of making your dreams real either starts or dies:

Remember:

Adopting The Four Thinking Barriers FREQUENTLY benefits others, and NEVER benefits us.

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## I'm going to give you four lines to memorize. These are The Four THINKING Barriers.

- **SAFE never starts,**
- **PERFECT never finishes,**
- **VICTIM never acts,**
- **FEEL never thinks.**

You might not have any of these mindsets, or you might have one of them, or you might have them all. Even if you don't have any of them, you need to recognize them and recognize what to do to deal with them, because situations change, life comes at us with nasty surprises, and sometimes things go right — a situation fraught with its own dangers. So let's start with the trouble you can get into when things are going right, or when you're trying to make them go right.

**Let's begin with SAFE.**

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# VICTIM Never Acts

Let us take a moment here to define victim, as opposed to VICTIM, and survivor, as opposed to SURVIVOR.

A victim is in the middle of a disaster. Hurricane, flood, earthquake, kidnapping, molestation in progress, a beating during an abusive relationship, starvation during a famine, possible extermination during a holocaust. A victim needs help, and needs help now, because if he or she does not get help, he or she may die.

A survivor is someone who walks or crawls away from the disaster still breathing. The survivor stays a survivor until the immediate effects of the trauma have passed. I was in an earthquake in Guatemala on February 3rd, 1976, twelve miles from the epicenter. My parents, my brother and sister and I were living in an adobe-built, tile-roofed house in Chiquimula, and for something like a minute, the floor heaved and the walls shook from side to side, my sister's and my beds slid across the floor into each other and hit walls, and the outside wind-lock on our door slipped down so that we were trapped in the room. The quake was huge; uncounted and uncountable tens of thousands of people died. Whole villages slid off the sides of mountains and were buried in the valleys below, people were crushed, and fires broke out.

There are people who are really victims. While the quake was going on, I was an earthquake victim. When the roar and the screaming subsided and the world stopped shaking, I was a survivor. I was a survivor through the next several months, too, when we slept outside on the ground in Guatemala so that we wouldn't be killed by aftershocks bringing the roof down on us, and when we moved back to the sticks outside of Lisbon, Ohio, I was still carrying the residual effects of survivor-hood every time I'd

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go launching off whatever surface I was occupying to run outside when the folks strip-mining a mile away from our house used dynamite and our foundation shook.

Within six months, though, I was done falling to pieces, done crying at weird times for no reason, and I was no longer a survivor. I was a fifteen-year-old in school. Life moved on, and so did I.

## Who Benefits From VICTIM?

Today, we are encouraged to hang on to victimhood, to become VICTIMS. If we've been through some crap, we are encouraged by friends who mean well, friends who get that warm fuzzy feeling when they help us out with something because we need to be helped. That's benign if we genuinely need help. Unfortunately, we are encouraged to become VICTIMS for more pernicious reasons, too.

Special interest groups have discovered that people who are not victims can nevertheless be convinced to identify themselves as VICTIMS, and they recruit VICTIMS fervently. Why would they do that? Because organizations from **every** political, religious, social, economic, racial, gender, and other special-interest segment have discovered that:

1) VICTIMS vote in blocs,
2) VICTIMS buy things,
3) VICTIMS donate, and
4) VICTIMS can be played against each other. But most importantly...

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5) VICTIMS believe that they are powerless to make changes in their own lives, and that they need to have someone **save** them.

**Don't believe me?**

Start really listening to all the people and groups out there who are doing their damnedest to convince you that you're a VICTIM. Going bald? You're a VICTIM of baldness, and no one will ever love you until you LET US SAVE YOU by letting some dude with a scalpel slice the skin off the back of your head to move bits of it to the front.

**Are you too fat, too skinny, too young, or too old?** You are a VICTIM of weight discrimination, age discrimination, being wrinkled, being zitty, making yourself puke, having bad genetics, eating fats, eating carbs, eating proteins. Nothing was your fault, nothing was your choice, and nothing you can do on your own will change your situation, but WE CAN SAVE YOU if you buy our surgery, buy our diet food, buy our drugs, buy our protein shakes, buy our hypnotism tapes, buy our psychotherapy, buy, buy, buy...

**Do you have a gender?** You are a VICTIM of the other gender, who has been out to get you since Eve betrayed Adam and Adam betrayed Eve, and your relationship with members of the opposite sex has nothing to do with you and everything to do with them and their evil machinations. But WE CAN SAVE YOU if you vote with our bloc, join our organization, hang out with our good ol' boys, demand extra rights, special cases, and that exceptions be made for you and VICTIMS like you.

**Are you poor, middle-class, or rich?** You're a VICTIM of the people who are making money and not sharing it with you, living off your hard work, taxing your investment earnings outrageously. We have a political party, political action committee, special interest group with a great lobbyist, corporate network, tax shelter investment opportunity for you to get in on, and if you vote/spend/bribe the way we tell you to, WE CAN SAVE YOU and get those other guys off your back and give all the benefits to you.

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**Are you a member of ANY ethnic group?** You are a VICTIM of the other ethnic groups, who are all out to steal your jobs, keep you from getting jobs, entice your men, corrupt your women, keep you poor, make you poor, and they are gonna *get you* unless you LET US SAVE YOU by joining our group, voting our vote, chanting our slogan...because we have the plan that will give the goodies to you and take them from those other guys.

**Women,** you're a VICTIM of weight, of genetics, of bone structure. The diet, cosmetics, and plastic surgery industries are ready to save you.

**Children** are VICTIMS of bad grades, of too much free time, of too much personality. The tutoring industry, after-school programs industry, and drug companies are ready to save them.

**Men,** you're VICTIMS of bad breath, skunky beer, armpit odor, expanding waistlines, jobs moving overseas, poor map-reading skills, and you have been denied the credit that you deserve. But it's okay. Mint-makers, brewers, deodorant manufacturers, diet-food companies, headhunters, GPS manufacturers, and the credit card industry are all gonna save you with solutions for you that are...? Yeah...?

Priceless.

Riiiiiiiiiiiight.

If you have been denied the credit you deserve, is being $100,000 in debt to credit card companies at 19%-29% interest going to save you?

## So here's a little question for you...

How many people who choose to be VICTIMS, who sit there and wait to be saved, *ever* get what they want out of life?

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And just as an aside, bald guys are sexy, so don't waste your money on bad fake hair, or creams with terrifying side effects, or being scalped by an expensive professional. Shave your head and say, "Hey world, this is me. I'm gorgeous." That confidence is a breathtaking and beautiful thing.

## VICTIM Is A Trap

The job of the victim — and this is real victims as well as the manufactured kind — is to hang on and stay alive while waiting to be saved. To tread water. The state of the victim is powerlessness. The mindset of the victim is hopeless resignation, or desperation, or fear.

If the victim says, "Screw this, I'm tired of waiting," and swims to shore under his own power, or digs his own way out of the rubble, or creates his own business and buys his way out of the barrio...he ain't a victim. He ain't a survivor. He is his own hero.

Unless your life is in immediate danger or you are squeaking through the immediate aftermath of hell, you are not benefited in the slightest by believing that you need to be saved before you can make your life what you want it to be. Your subconscious, though — your Muse — is more than happy to absorb all the pity and self-pity you care to throw in its direction, and to luxuriate in the sheer comfort of having people tell you that nothing that has gone wrong in your life is because of choices you made. It's all someone else's fault, someone else's evil agenda, someone else who is keeping you down.

Your conscious mind is perfectly capable of looking at your current situation and defining exactly what that situation is. Did the roof over your head just blow off, or float away, or is the floor shaking? Are you eating mice or cockroaches to round out your diet? Are people in your neighborhood being rounded up and herded off to concentration camps?

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No? Good.

If you are in fact living a life with a roof over your head, food to eat, and no one or nothing actively trying to part you from your skin, odds are pretty good that you're not a victim, but a VICTIM, and you need to stand up and tell your Muse to knock off the pity party, because you have a life you want to live and things you want to do and none of the people who want to SAVE YOU are going to help you reach your goals. You're on your own here, and while you can find folks who will encourage you, and believe in you, and cheer you on, **the only one who can get you to the Promised Land of the dreams you dare to dream is you**.

But don't expect a lot of support for this approach to your own life, because THEY — the folks who benefit from VICTIMS — have discovered the genius master strategy used with such brilliance by the Romans to expand an empire.

## Divide and conquer.

Segment the population, keep them hating each other, never let them see that they have more in common with each other than they have with the power-seekers, encourage them to lie on their backs and scream in unison for salvation, and when they are dependent and willing VICTIMS, give them bread and circuses. Or, in the case of modern civilization, reality TV and jumbo bags of potato chips.

**Who are THEY?** You know the answer to this one. Who is telling you how bad you have it, how much better everyone else has it, how much you need THEM to save YOU? The person or group telling you you're a VICTIM is your "THEM" — the one who's hurting you most.

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# Your VICTIM Assignment

If you discover you've adopted the role of VICTIM, stop now. Set your timer for ten minutes, and for ten minutes, write down every good thing you have in your life. Start with air and sunlight, and the fact that you can breathe, and the fact that sunlight keeps food growing, rain falling, and the world living. List every person in your life who cares about you, every single thing you own or have access to that makes your life easier (the fridge is a biggie), every place you can go and everything you can do that brings you some comfort or some joy. If you're still writing when the ten minutes is up, reset your timer and start another ten. Do this until you cannot think of one more thing in your life that is good... or until your subconscious, your Muse, wakes up and realizes that you were being used.

Only when you realize that **you control your own future and you don't need to be saved** to make your dreams happen will you actually be willing to take the steps to do what you have to do to get there.

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